



National Transportation Safety Board

The Chairman's Corner

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Monday, November 19, 2007

NTSB Meets to Discuss Federal Most Wanted List

Six near runway collisions at San Francisco, New York, Ft. Lauderdale and other airports were narrowly averted in just the last six months leading the NTSB to highlight the issue of runway safety as among its most important issue areas to be addressed by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).

At the public meeting on November 8, the NTSB reviewed its "Most Wanted List" of safety improvements, a list established in 1990 that focuses attention on critical changes needed by federal agencies to reduce accidents and save lives.

Half of the 44 safety recommendations in the 15 federal issue areas on the Most Wanted List were issued to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), with the rest going to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA), the National Air Traffic Controllers Association (NATCA), and the United States Coast Guard.

One of the two new issue areas added to the Most Wanted List was collision prevention through enhanced vehicle safety technology, which NTSB Chairman Mark V. Rosenker called "one of the most encouraging developments in transportation safety in a very long time." The NTSB has asked the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to act more quickly in setting performance standards for Collision Warning System and adaptive cruise control systems in new commercial and passenger vehicles.

The Board also voted to add human fatigue in railroad operations as a new issue area on the List, asking that adjustments to crewmember work schedules be revised to reduce the likelihood of train crews operating equipment in a fatigued condition.

The NTSB also added three safety recommendations on air traffic controller fatigue to the existing aviation issue area that addresses human fatigue. The Board is asking the FAA to develop a program to educate controllers and those who schedule them about the causes, effects and safety implications of fatigue. And the Board asked the FAA to work in conjunction with the National Air Traffic Controllers Association (NATCA) in revising work-scheduling policies to reduce the incidence of fatigue on the job.

In addition to pinpointing important safety issues, the Most Wanted List also rates agencies by the timeliness with which they act to implement the recommendations

Go-Team Launches to Marine Accident in San Francisco

The NTSB launched a go-team to the scene of a marine accident in San Francisco, California. On November 7, the *MV Cosco Busan* struck a support tower on the Bay Bridge in heavy fog, leaving a 100-foot hole in the hull approximately 2-10 feet above the waterline. An estimated 58,000 gallons of oil has been released into the San Francisco Bay. There was no damage to the bridge and no injuries were reported. A go-team was launched on November 10, with Tom Roth-Roffy serving as Investigator-in-charge. Mr. Roth-Roffy was accompanied by Member Debbie Hersman and eight NTSB staff including: Reshan Beal, Brian Curtis, Larry Bowling, Crystal Thomas, Eric Sager, Peter Knudson, Liam LaRue, and Rob Jones. As a result of the accident a congressional hearing was called for on Monday, November 19, in which the Member Hersman will testify and the Office of Government Affairs will be represented by Brenda Yager.

Chairman Rosenker Addresses Transportation Safety in Australia



At the invitation of the Australian Transportation Safety Board (ATSB), Chairman Mark Rosenker traveled to Canberra, Australia to deliver the keynote address at a highway safety gathering and at an aviation safety event. While in Australia, he also met with officials at the US Embassy in Canberra, as well as the ATSB and the New South Wales Office of Transport Safety Investigation (OTSI) in Sydney. On October 30 Chairman Rosenker addressed two road safety topics before an audience at the Australia National Academy of Science. He spoke first on the topic of "NTSB experience with road safety investigation" where he emphasized the importance of learning lessons from past accidents to prevent future ones. In the afternoon, he delivered a presentation on "The Promise of ITS" or Intelligent Transportation Systems. On November 1, Chairman Rosenker delivered the keynote address at the Safeski's 2007 Conference where he spoke of the NTSB's role in international aviation accidents. After delivering the speeches in Canberra, the Chairman, who was accompanied by Tom Doyle,

traveled on to Sydney to meet with ATSB Chairman, Mr. Kym Bills and Mr. Paul O'Sullivan of the New South Wales Office of Transport Safety Investigation. Chairman Rosenker, Chairman Bills, and Mr. O'Sullivan discussed the on-going efforts to increase transportation safety on an international level.

NTSB Signs Memorandum of Cooperation with Korea

On November 7, Representatives from the Aviation and Railway Accident Investigation Board (ARAIB) of the Republic of Korea were at NTSB HQ to meet with various staff, tour the laboratories, and sign a Memorandum of Cooperation with the NTSB. The purpose of this MOC between the NTSB and the ARAIB is to set forth the principles of a cooperative working relationship between the Parties in the area of transportation accidents and incident investigations. The Parties will, to the extent authorized by the laws and regulations of their respective nations, advance transportation safety and coordinate investigation activities through mutual commitments to enhance investigation standards, policies, guidelines and procedures; support each other's investigations; and share expertise and training opportunities.

The ARAIB was represented by Director General Mr. Kim, Kwan Youn, Railway Investigation Team Deputy Director Mr. Han, Nam Sup and Ms. Jenny Yoo, Aircraft Accident Investigator.

Pictured with Chairman Rosenker to his left is Deputy General Mr. Kim, along with Mr. Han (far right), and NTSB Staff: Dr. Vern Ellingstad, Joe Osterman, Vice Chairman Sumwalt, Tom Haueter, and Bob Chipkevich.



Board Members Speak at Aviation Business Roundtable Meetings

Vice Chairman Sumwalt and Member Hersman addressed aviation business leaders at the National Air Transportation Association (NATA) 2007 Aviation Business Roundtable Meetings on November 5th and 6th in Washington, DC. NATA is a national trade association representing the business interests of general aviation service companies on legislative and regulatory matters at the Federal level, and approximately 50 of the leading members gathered to discuss aviation safety with Members Sumwalt and Hersman. The Vice Chairman's opening remarks highlighted the need for an equivalent level of safety for flights operated under Part 91 Subpart K, 135 or 121. "When we exchange money for something that is presented as or perceived to be a professionally provided service, then we have an implicit contract that those services will be provided with a higher standard of care," he emphasized.

Member Hersman presented information regarding the Southwest Airlines accident in December 2005 at Chicago's Midway Airport. She explained the need for landing distance assessments provided at the time of arrival. Meeting participants were appreciative of the Safety Board's involvement in this roundtable, and were left with a greater understanding of the new recommendations and rule-making efforts regarding landing distance assessments that will affect their operations.

NTSB Receives 5th Consecutive Clean Audit

For the fifth consecutive year, the National Transportation Safety Board's financial statements received an unqualified, or "clean," opinion from the Department of Transportation Inspector General. The results originate from an audit conducted on the Safety Board's financial statements for Fiscal Year 2007. In addition, the Board met the accelerated November 15th submission deadline. The results of this audit prove our commitment to excellence in all phases of the Safety Board's operations.

Congratulations to the entire CFO Team and CFO Steve Goldberg.

The Accountability of Tax Dollars Act of 2002 requires small agencies, such as the NTSB, to submit audited financial statements to the Congress and the Office of Management and Budget. The NTSB Reauthorization Act of 2000 gave the DOT/IG its audit oversight authority over the NTSB's financial management, property management and business operations.

2007-2008 Thrift Savings Plan Highlights

Review Your TSP Account - Open Seasons for Thrift Savings Plan and percentage limitations on employee's contributions have been eliminated. TSP Contributions are limited only by the restrictions imposed by the Internal Revenue Code, which is \$15,500 for 2007 and same for 2008; and these contributions can be made at any time. As we approach the end of 2007, you should review your TSP account to make sure you are contributing the maximum you want to, up to the IRS limit.

Catch-up Contributions in 2008 - Although the IRS limit for 2008 is \$15,500, an additional catch-up amount can be contributed if the following conditions are met: If you are at least age 50 (or will become age 50 during 2008) and if you already make or will make the maximum employee contribution of \$15,500 for 2008, you may make an additional catch-up contribution to your TSP of up to \$5,000. (The potential maximum for 2008 is the IRS limit of \$15,500 plus the catch-up of \$5,000.)

If you have any questions, please contact Lisa Kleiner, NTSB Benefits and Work life Advisor, on (202) 314-6462 or at lisa.kleiner@ntsb.gov.